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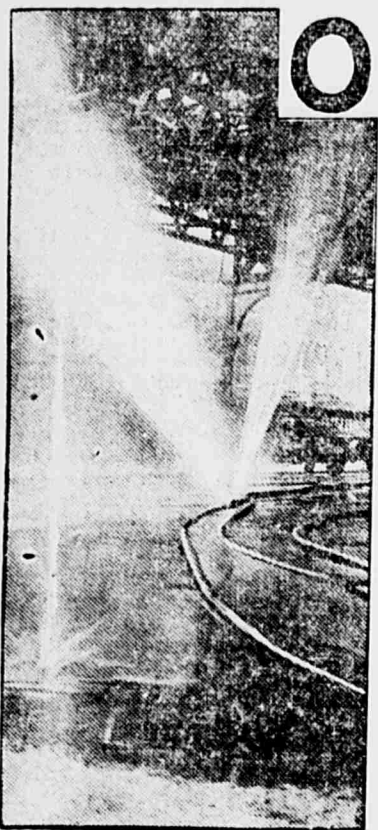
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MORE ROTTEN-HOSE MURDERS.



ONLY four lengths of hose burst at the Worth street fire. Only two firemen were killed. This is an improvement over the Parker Building fire, where more hose burst and three firemen were killed.

Nevertheless, it is a high price to pay for rotten hose. The money loss of the Parker Building fire was \$2,000,000, enough to pay for a ten years' supply of best quality hose that no fire engine has enough pressure to burst. The Worth street fire money loss was \$200,000, enough to buy good new hose for the fire companies in the skyscraper district.

But this measure of loss in dollars is paltry compared with the loss in lives and in the feeling of security to the people.

Suppose that at the next big tenement fire the hose bursts. Suppose that fire occurs in the middle of the night. How many women and children will be burned to death?

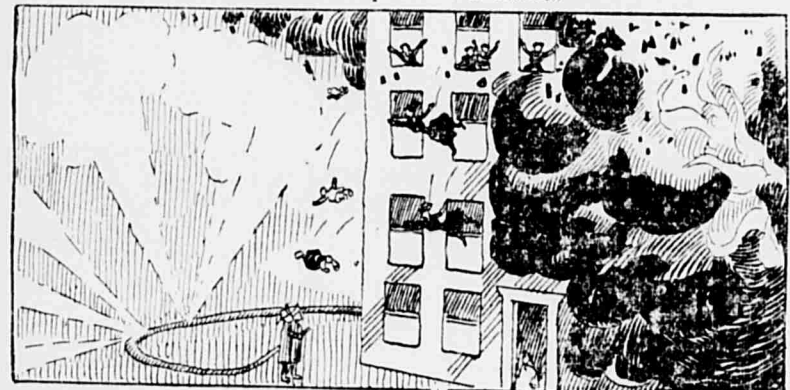
How long can the firemen of New York, courageous as they have al-

ways been, be expected to enter burning buildings when their lives are dependent on the length of time that the hose holds water before bursting?

It is too much to expect of any man.

It takes a brave man to risk his life under the best conditions. No coward would expose himself to danger even with a guarantee of perfect hose and of a life insurance policy in his wife's name. He would think too much of his own safety.

Even the bravest men will shrink from danger when the needless risk of rotten hose and low-water pressure is added.



Two more firemen's coffins are ready. And still M. Francis Loughman is deputy to Water Commissioner O'Brien, and the rotten hose which he sold the city, and which the fire underwriters said was the worst of all, has not been replaced and the lengths which have not yet burst are awaiting their opportunity to add to the list of rotten-hose victims.

Why blame Lantry?

He owed his appointment to Mayor McClellan and his tenure of office to the good will of the Mayor and his chief adviser, Commissioner O'Brien. Suppose that Lantry had tested and thrown out the rest of the Windsor hose which Loughman sold. Suppose that he had done his best to compel the Corporation Counsel to sue on Loughman's bond. What would have happened then?

Every politician knows that there are more ways of killing a cat than by skinning it alive. One of the Commissioners of Accounts who had to do with the rotten hose investigation found this out a few days ago.

The people will put the responsibility where it belongs, and they know where it belongs, even though the Mayor's Commissioners of Accounts did not say that in their report.

Letters from the People.

No. 239 Broadway.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
What is the address of the Legal Aid Society?
M. A. S.

Length of Pole.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
Can any reader solve this and explain it? A farmer put up a pole, one-quarter of it stood in mud, one-third stood in water, ten feet were above surface; how long was the pole?
M. M.

A Veteran's Ideas.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
Having served in the civil war I fully agree with the communications in regard to the proposed War monument to be erected in Georgia. It has been claimed that War was tried by an illegal court-martial under false charges of excessive cruelty, etc., to prisoners. But in fact the court was composed of such reputable men as Gen. Lew Wallace, Mott, Geary Thomas and others, in whom the American people rightly had the utmost confidence.
ELLIOTT H. SHER,
Pleasantville, N. Y.

Why Climate Changes.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
"Civilization is the direct cause of the change in climate of our recent winters. Many of our winter storms come in across over 500 miles of lakes. The enormous traffic on the lakes tends toward keeping them from freezing, and this moderates our weather. There is practically no winter as long as the

lakes, the St. Lawrence and the Hudson Rivers are not frozen. These storms that come in from the south, or east must cross the Gulf Stream, which moderates them. An iceberg will change the weather for miles. A field of them will change it for fifty or one hundred miles. So will a volcano. All our cities are equal to a volcano. Chicago and New York are equal to a half dozen volcanoes each. This will change the weather in winter as well as in summer.
J. H. WAILLENBERG.

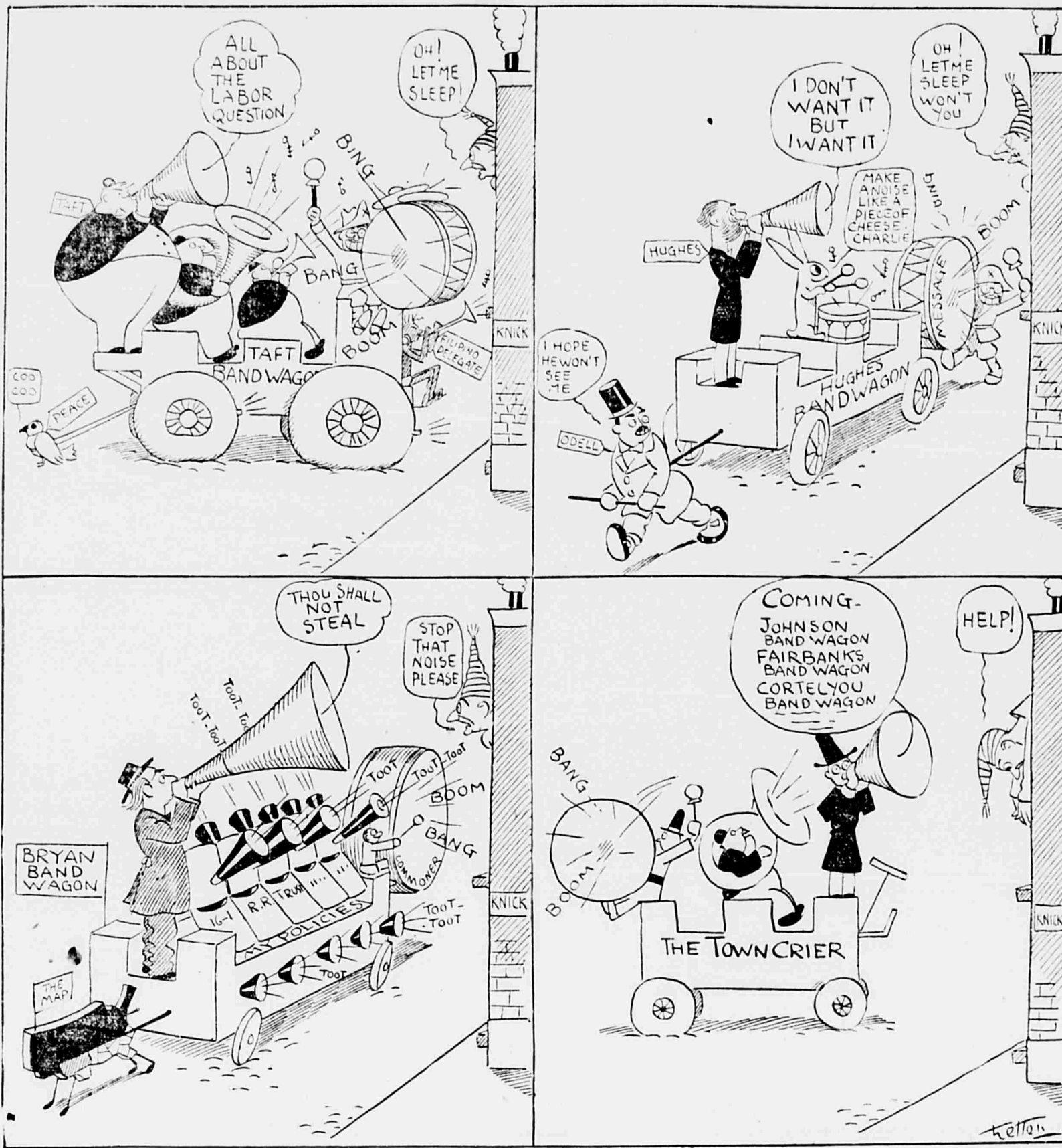
A "Blushing" Query.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
What experienced reader can advise me now I can be cured of blushing?
A. B.

Enforced Holidays.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
Can any one tell me why poor laborers in the Department of Highways, who work two or three days per week in winter must be laid off without pay on holidays—while many other city employees get full pay?
BRONX LABORER.

In Any Good Encyclopedia.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
Where can I obtain full information regarding sources? MRS. B. A. C., Providence, R. I.
Searab originally were the bodies or stone reproductions of bodies, buried with ancient Egyptians of rank. It is difficult nowadays to procure a genuine antique scharab. Millions of modern imitations are made.

Work for the Anti-Noise Society.

By Maurice Ketten.



Never Try to Explain Away a Black Eye to Your Friends; They All Know How You Got It, and Don't Need to Be Told

By Roy L. McCardell.



ROY L. MCCARDELL.

Mr. Jarr was hurrying from the Subway to his office. As he stepped off the curb his feet slipped and down he went. He was carrying an umbrella with a knob handle. In some wild way he struck himself a severe blow in the eye with the knob of the umbrella. This, aside from some dirt on his overcoat and a dent in his derby hat, was all the damage he sustained, but it was enough.

His eye commenced to swell, and when he reached the office it was nearly closed and the contusion was turning black.

"It was a long time coming to you," said the head bookkeeper cheerfully, "but I see you got it, and got it good."

"I slipped!" began Mr. Jarr.

But a look of pleasant incredulity shone in the head bookkeeper's face, and he called to the cashier to come and look at the lovely mouse Jarr had on his eye.

"Oh, you will, will you?" said the cashier, with a guffaw. "Now I guess you'll be good!"

"Or so," began Mr. Jarr, but the assistant manager joined the group and said: "You'll stop looking for trouble NOW, won't you?"

"Look here!" said the exasperated Mr. Jarr, "you fellows stop your kidding! I slipped and fell at the corner and jabbed the knob of my umbrella into my eye!"

"Yes, you did!" said the mocking chorus.

"I'll bet some little fellow half his size did it," said the bookkeeper.

"Or he picked a quarrel with a cripple," said the cashier.

"I would advise you, Jarr, to give up limited boxes, and if you will insist on a participating interest in athletics and field sports, cut out boxing and go in for sprinting, it's safer," said the assistant manager.

He knew where he would get some sympathy, at least he thought he would.

so at lunch time he hurried to the place where his friends regularly awaited him. At the sight of Mr. Jarr's discolored eye Mr. Rangle gave a shout of joy. "What a peach of a shiner!" he cried. "What a lovely purple chrysanthemum!"

"Cut it out!" growled Mr. Jarr. "I've been up against a bunch of nicks, oleon comedians all morning. I fell!"

"Sure you fell, when you were hit," chorried Mr. Rangle. "Would I'd been there to see?"

"And you don't believe me?" asked Mr. Jarr.

"I wouldn't believe my brother about a black eye," said Mr. Rangle. "I'm only glad you've got a new style story. All the others I have heard for the last few years have been 'The crank on the confounded old automobile flew back and it's lucky it didn't break my nose!'"

"Oh, you shut up!" said Mr. Jarr.

So it was all day, and on his way home Mr. Jarr took up a new line of explanation.

"Got a bad eye; how did you get it?" he was asked.

"Got in a fight in a gin-mill and got a swift punch in the eye!" said Mr. Jarr with great gusto.

"One of them barroom prize-fighters?" asked the friend sympathetically.

"Somebody should shoot the dirty ruffians!"

"Why, no; it was a little bit of a fellow," said Mr. Jarr, "and I only got what I deserved, for I insulted him about nothing!"

"Oh, well, you did him up, I'll bet!" said the other.

"Huh!" said Mr. Jarr glibly. "If they hadn't pulled him off me I'd 'a' been done for!"

"That's the way I like to hear men talk!" said the friend. "Shake hands, Jarr, you're a hero in my eyes. I wouldn't have the courage to tell the truth like that!"

As Mr. Jarr entered the house he began, "I—"

But Mrs. Jarr came forward with an alarmed look and said, "Oh, I knew you'd fall and jab that umbrella knob into your eye!"

Then, as she started for the witch-hazel bottle, Mr. Jarr put his arms around her and said, "You're good enough for me!"

"I'm too good for you, I reckon," said Mrs. Jarr complacently as she bathed the swollen eye.

Miss Lonely Thought the Auctioneer Was Her Mr. Man ☆ By F. G. Long



The Story of the Operas

By Albert Payson Terhune.

NO. 27—PUCCINI'S "LA BOHEME"



RODOLPHE.

IN a bare Latin Quarter garret in Paris, on Christmas Eve, 1830, two young men shivered over a rusty stove long innocent of fire. The youths were Rodolphe, poet and dramatist, and Marcel, painter. They were geniuses and starving! A brilliant thought occurred to Rodolphe. Tossing into the stove the manuscript of a play that had had the honor of being rejected by every manager in Paris, he set it alight. The flames blazed up and the two warmed their stiff fingers in luxuriant comfort.

"I never knew before that your play contained so much sparkle and warmth," commented Colline, the amiable philosopher, who had come in during the conflagration and whose shabby form was now pressed close to the stove.

The door flew open. In marched shop boys bearing food, wine and firewood. They were marshaled to the table by a grotesque Bohemian—Schaunard, the musician—who bade them lay down their parcels and clear out. Then Schaunard impressively laid a pile of small silver on the table beside the provisions and fuel.

"A miracle!" chorused the wondering trio by the stove.

Schaunard quickly explained his good fortune. A rich Englishman, annoyed by a squawking parrot next door, had commissioned the musician to play his violin under the window until the bird should die. Schaunard had played three days, then poisoned the parrot, collected his pay and hurried to the relief of his hungry friends. Scarce had the quartet begun their feast when Benoit, the landlady, arrived to demand the long-due rent. The friends proceeded to make him tipsy, confound him by a babel of abuse and hustle him out. Then they prepared to adjourn for the evening to the Cafe Momus. Rodolphe had some work to finish, but promised to join the others in a few minutes at the cafe. Left alone, the poet had scarcely begun to write when a timid knock sounded at his door. On the threshold stood a pale, lovely girl. She was Mimì, the artificial flower-maker who occupied the adjoining room. Her candle had blown out and she came to borrow a light from Rodolphe.

She and the poet fell into talk. Both were lonely, both young. It was love at first sight. Arm in arm they set off for the Cafe Momus.

Rodolphe introduced his new sweetheart to his three friends who were already awaiting him at a table outside the cafe. The street was alive with Christmas shoppers. Many an admiring glance was cast at Mimì's fragile beauty. Rodolphe grew wild with jealousy whenever the girl's eyes strayed to another. Marcel alone did not welcome the newcomer cordially. For the artist had believed himself a woman-hater ever since the day when pretty Musette, his adored one, had forsaken him for rich old Alcandro. A star in the crowd, and Musette, plucked by Alcandro, took her seat at a nearby table. She and Marcel saw each other at once, but each pretended to be oblivious of the other. At last Musette could stand it no longer. Crying out that her shoe hurt her she ordered Alcandro to hurry to the nearest cobbler's and buy her another pair. As soon as the old man's back was turned, she rushed joyously into Marcel's arms. When Alcandro returned with the shoes he found both tables deserted. Mimì, Musette and the four friends had decamped, leaving the entire bill for the deserted Alcandro to settle.

It was a bitter cold, snowy morning in February. Outside the tollgate tavern at one of the entrances to the city a throng of market folk were hastening into Paris. Mimì, chilled to the bone through her thin cloak, advanced past the crowd and feebly mounted the inn steps. A cough racked her fragile body and she looked wan and ill. As she reached the entrance she almost collided with a man who was on his way out. It was Marcel. The artist had accepted a commission to paint signs for the inn and for the time was living there. He halted in amazement at sight of Mimì. Quickly she told him her story. Rodolphe had grown so insanely jealous that she had decided it was best that she and the poet should separate. He had been spending the night at the inn and she had come to say good-by to him. Rodolphe appeared, as she was speaking, and Mimì hastily slipped behind a tree. The poet at once began talking to Marcel on the same theme. Mimì, he said, had raked him with jealousy; yet he still adored her. She was daily growing weaker from her cough. She needed money and comfort to restore the health that poverty had crushed.

The girl's passionate sobbing revealed her presence to the two. At the same moment the voice of Musette, flirting gaily with some officers in the tavern, sent Marcel rushing off to his little sweetheart in a rage. Mimì and Rodolphe, left alone together, exchanged heartbroken, infinitely tender glances. They adored each other, yet felt they must part. In the springtime, perhaps, she would be well again, and then—

Marcel and Musette, quarrelling violently, rushed out of the inn. The painter bade his light-hearted sweetheart become forever out of his life. Thus—Marcel and Musette in fury, Mimì and Rodolphe in tears—the two couples separated.

The Latin Quarter garret again. Marcel and Rodolphe were at work there as before. But the old gaiety was gone. Every few minutes one or the other would drop pen or brush and sit staring miserably in front of him, full of sad thought of an absent sweetheart. Schaunard and Colline entered, and the four made some pretense at jollity over their frugal meal of rois and saut fish. In the midst of the repast, Marcel started up in amazement. Musette stood at the door! She was supporting on her arm Mimì, who was too weak to stand alone. Musette had found her dying and at Mimì's entreaty had brought her back to the man who loved her. The friends carried the half senseless girl to a couch and Schaunard and Colline hurried off to open their coats and books to buy her food and medicine. Marcel drew Musette aside, leaving Rodolphe with his dying love. Gently, wisely, as in a dream, Marcel and Rodolphe talked of their former happiness together and planned for a beautiful future which both secretly knew could never come to pass. Rodolphe, at last, wholly overcome, burst into tears that he could no longer choke back.

"Don't weep!" whispered Mimì. "I'm better already. And I shall stay here with you forever!"

She sank back in his arms. Musette was on her knees, praying in silent agony.

"She is better," cried Rodolphe, a wild hope possessing him.

Schaunard bent over the still figure and answered solemnly:

"She is dead!"

The story of "The Masked Ball" will be published Saturday.

Birds Have the Keenest Vision.

By Dr. Casey A. Wood, of Chicago.

SO far I have determined that the keenest eyesight is probably possessed by water birds and kingfishers, although every kind of bird possesses keener eyesight than does man. It is a fact that the eyesight of man is going to get worse in the future and is getting worse all the time, that is, we are growing more near-sighted. The occupations of a majority of men in cities compel them to do their work at very close range. This removes the necessity of the far-sighted eyes with which most men are endowed. It is probably a good thing that we are becoming near-sighted. As an example of the visual capacity of some birds, one may think for a moment of a hawk pecking several hundred yards above a hawk in which a field mouse or a small chicken is hidden. In a few seconds after the hawk is sighted it is seized by the bird, whose sharp sight has not only detected it, but whose wonderful accommodative apparatus permits of a sure and continuous fixation from hundreds of metres to less than a metre within an incredibly short space of time. Variations in the character of this acute vision are seen in many other birds: in the humming bird, that darts here and there so quickly that the human eye cannot follow it, and yet comes suddenly to rest on an almost invisible twig; in the woodcock, that fits through the dark woods, avoiding every tree, shrub and branch as if they were nonexistent; in the owl that combines good diurnal with good nocturnal vision, and in the kingfisher, that sees as well in the air as he does in water. Chicago Inter-Ocean.

The Hundred Best Books.

By Clement Shorter.

THE fact is that there is no possibility of naming the hundred best books. The naming of them for any large general audience is quite impossible. All that is possible in such a connection is to state emphatically that there are very few books that are equally suitable to every kind of intellect," says Clement Shorter. In his book "Immortal Memories," "Temperament" as well as intellectual endowment makes for so much in reading. Take, for example, the "Imitation of Christ." George Eliot, although not a Christian, found it soul-satisfying. Thackeray, as I think a more robust intellect, found it worthless as mischievous as did Eugene Sue. There are great books that can be read only by the few, but surely the very greatest appeal alike to the man of rich intellectual endowment and to the man to whom all processes of reasoning are incomprehensible.

Bits of Information.

AMPS cause 500 fires a year in London, gas 219, chimneys, 170.

Six of the largest colleges in Switzerland have 2,198 female students.

The average length of life of a tradesman is two-thirds that of a farmer.

France is responsible for the game of billiards. Devisne invented it in 1573.

The highest point to which man can ascend without his health being seriously affected is 14,000 feet.